

N^o 11

A
S E R M O N

PREACH'D on the

D E A T H

Of the R E V E R E N D

Mr. *William Hocker.*

With an Account of his

L I F E and C H A R A C T E R.

Published with farther Enlargements at the Request of the Hearers.

By *THOMAS REYNOLDS.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN CLARK, at the Bible and Crown in the Poultry near Cheapside: And EMAN. MATTHEWS, at the Bible in Paternoster Row, 1722.

Price Six Pence.

(iii)



TO THE
PEOPLE
Lately under the
PASTORAL CARE

Of the REVEREND

Mr. Samuel Pomfret.

Christian Friends,

WHATEVER I may have had of
Vanity in thinking, that any
thing of mine might be of Ser-
vice to the Publick, I can assure you, I
am now very much, if not perfectly,
cured of it; and that, what does thus
appear in View, has been more from
Necessity than Inclination.

A 2

When

When I was earnestly desir'd to preach a Sermon on the Death of my good Brother and old Acquaintance the Revd. Mr. Hocker, who lately officiated among you in Quality of an Assistant; I thought it my Duty to chuse a Subject which might give me Occasion to say such Things as would be proper to affect you with a Sense of your Loss, and to handle it in such a plain and familiar Way, as would be suitable to the greatest Part of the Audience. It pleased God thro' his Blessing, to favour my Endeavours so far in your Acceptance, that upon the repeated Stroke of his Providence in the Death of your Reverend Pastor, (which followed soon after) I was apply'd to again, and much besought by his Relations, and several of you his Friends, to perform the same Office for Him, that I had done for the other.

I was conscious, that a Person of his noted PIETY AND ZEAL, did deserve One of a superior Genius to engage in so difficult a Task; and that there were others far more capable of performing

it than my self, several of whom I nam'd. This caused in me a Reluctance and Backwardness, that was almost Invincible. But after Attempts had been in vain used with a Brother, (deservedly respected and much honoured by me), who was in no Condition to do it thro' the Indisposition of Body, which then lay heavy upon him; your Importunity with me was such, as would admit of no Denial.

The principal Consideration, that after many Thoughts, conquer'd my Backwardness and even forc'd me into a Compliance with your pressing Desires, was, that I knew not how I could answer it to the Challenges of my own Mind, and the Reflections of others, should I have absolutely refus'd it. And as your applying to me in the Manner you did, gave me reason to believe, I had not displeas'd you in the late Performance, so likewise to hope, that thro' the same Divine Assistance, I might avoid displeasing you in what you had again requested. Having yielded to your Persuasi-

suasions, I resolved to follow the same Rules I observ'd on the former melancholy Occasion, and I am thankful to GOD, that it was with so much Success.

I had not got over my great Fatigue in preaching to so croud'd an Auditory and standing much longer than I am us'd to do; before several of you came and signify'd to me not only your own Desires and theirs, that heard me; but even the Demands of many of the Congregation, (who thro' the vast Throng of People were not able to come within Hearing) that I would publish my Discourse, and also that, which a few weeks before, I had given you on the Death of Mr. Hocker.

To be short, I found there was no resisting in this Case, any more than in the former: Or had I done it, I since find, I should have been compell'd to it, for Reasons that are well known, and which it is not worth my while here to take notice of. Wherefore having revis'd my Notes, and made some Additions to the Sermon I preach'd on the Death of my
Reve-

Reverend Brother Mr. Hocker, especially to the short Account I gave of him, which I have put by it self; I send that abroad first, as claiming it in order of Time, it having been first preached by me. The other I shall publish, with GOD's leave, as soon as I have gather'd up the Memorials of Mr. Pomfret's Life, which will be in a little Time.

If it shall please GOD to impress the Minds of well dispos'd and honest People in Reading, as much as some were in the Hearing; and the Accounts given of two such worthy Ministers, may tend to awaken a becoming Zeal in us their Brethren who survive; I shall have no reason to repent my Pains, and I am sure very little to be concern'd at the ill natur'd Remarks and Censures, that shall be made by the Critical and Curious.

That it will please GOD to accompany with his special Blessing, what I thus present you, and was chiefly intended for your Use; That He would bear a merciful Regard for you in your present destitute Condition; and speedily repair
your

(viii)

*your double Loss in One, that shall have
a double Portion of his Spirit is, and
shall be the Prayer of*

Your respectful

and affectionate Servant

in our common Lord,

Rood-Lane
March 8. 1722.

THOMAS REYNOLDS.

The Reader is desir'd to correct with his Pen, the following Errata.

Page 15. l. 4. for *is*, r. *does*. p. 23. l. 27. for *when*, r. *at a Time*.
p. 40. l. 10. for *Mrather* r. *Mother*. p. 55. l. 12. for *to r. upon*.



ACTS



ACTS XX. 37, 38.

*And they all wept sore, and fell on
Paul's Neck and kissed him.*

*Sorrowing most of all for the Word which
he spake, that they should see his
Face no more.*

AS the Gospel of our blessed Lord and
Saviour Jesus Christ, attended with the
saving Influences of the Divine Spi-
rit, will by all serious Christians be
readily acknowledg'd to be the greatest Blessing,
that ever God bestowed upon an apostate mi-
serable World; so the having such to dispense
it, as are distinguishingly qualified to promote the
great and gracious Purposes of it, must be al-
low'd to hold the second Place in the Rank of
our choicest Mercies. From whence we can-
not but conclude, that the removing of such
from us, in what Way soever it pleases God
in his Providence to order it; must to those
who enjoyed the Benefit of their unwearied

B

Dili-

Diligence and Pains, afford Matter of much Grief and Affliction.

That it does so in the present Case with reference to our Reverend deceased Brother Mr. *William Hocker*, I believe most of you are sensible; which Reason has induc'd me to hope, there are none who knew his great Piety and valuable Abilities, and that duly consider the Circumstances of this Congregation, will think the Words I have chosen for the Subject of my Discourse, improper or unsuitable to this mournful Occasion.

They give us an Account of the great Sorrow, which the *Elders* of *Ephesus* and others, (who 'tis probable were in Company with them) expressed upon taking their last Farewel of the Apostle *Paul* at *Miletus*.

To this Place He had sent for them to come and meet him, as He was on his Way making all the haste He could to *Jerusalem*; having passed by *Ephesus* lest He should be detained there, and intending if it were possible to be at *Jerusalem* on the Day of *Pentecost*: out of an earnest desire to improve the Opportunity, which the great Concourse of People at that Time would give him of preaching and spreading the Gospel among them.

The *Elders* being come to *Miletus*, He acquaints them with the melancholy News of his leaving those Countries; that this was to be the last Interview He should have with them, and that after this *they should see his Face no more* in this World. And having but little Time

to spend with them, He improves it to the best Purposes He was able. Accordingly

In the *first Place* He gives them his farewell Exhortation from *ver. 18* of this *chap.* to *verse 36.* In the whole of which he testifies the utmost Concern for their Welfare that was possible; and as by the Divine Blessing on his Labours, He had been the glorious Instrument of converting them to the Faith of the Gospel, so now he was about to leave them, there was nothing He had more at Heart than the securing to them the *Pearl of great Price* He should leave in their Hands. His Aim therefore in this Address was to engage them to a firm Adherence to that Faith which he had taught them; to warn them against the Dangers to which they would be expos'd after his Departure; and to excite them to the diligent Discharge of their Duty in all the Parts of it, by that Pattern of Affection and Zeal He had set them during the whole Time He was with them, from the first Day of his coming to the last, in which He was now to take his leave of them.

They that consider the whole of it must acknowledge, that nothing could be more suitable to the Occasion, or be manag'd with greater Wisdom and Skill, in order to reach those great and good Ends He had in View. The Matters recommended were of the greatest Weight and Importance; the Arguments made use of, exceeding powerful and awakening; the Manner in which he applied himself to them, the most tender and moving that could be; and the whole Management in all respects

becoming an Apostle that was now performing his last Offices in Person among them. Should I enter into a farther Detail of Particulars, it would be more than the Time will allow; wherefore leaving this to your private Reflections, I shall only observe,

In the *second Place*, That the Apostle having said as much, and with as much Affection, as a Man could deliver in so few Words and so short a Space of Time; He then recommends their Persons and Concerns to GOD by most humble and earnest Prayer, imitating herein the Example of his blessed Lord and Master, who when He took leave of his Disciples, after He had preached to them, pray'd with them all, *John* xvii. 1. If we consider the tender Spirit, the affectionate Temper of the Apostle, and the Grace wherewith He abounded; it will be easy to imagine how plentifully He bestowed his good Wishes upon them at this Time, and with what fervent Importunity He pleaded and wrestled with God for them. Whatever Interest He had at the Throne of Grace, He improv'd it to the utmost for their Sakes; and if ever Heaven had close Siege laid to it, this was a time. These were Persons on whom he had bestow'd unspeakable Pains, and for whom he had ventur'd his Life; He beheld them as the blessed Fruits of his vast Labours, as those for whom *He had travail'd in Birth until Christ was formed in them*; as his Children, that were born unto God under his Ministry. And He could not but regard them with the tender Affection and Bowels of a spiritual Father. Upon all these

these Accounts, his Heart was deeply concern'd for them now at parting, of which he gives the fullest Proof, not only by his pathetic Admonitions and Counsels, but by closing all with most earnest Intreaties and Prayers to GOD on their behalf. *Having thus spoken* (*viz.* the Exhortation before mention'd) *He kneeled down,* putting himself in the most humble Posture, *and pray'd with them all,* v. 36. their Hearts going along with him in what He said, and joining their AMEN to all the kind Requests He put up to GOD for them.

And now the Words of the Text give us an Account how greatly the whole Company was mov'd by this valedictory Exhortation and Prayer, and in what an affectionate Manner they, on their Part, took their final leave of the Apostle.

They all wept sore, and fell on Paul's Neck, and kissed him. Sorrowing most of all for the Word which he spake, that they should see his Face no more.

It is hardly to be suppos'd, that the Apostle, who was so often in Tears whilst with them, could himself refrain upon this Occasion. 'Tis probable He began, and the Tenderness of his own Affection wrought on theirs. The Tears that flow'd from his Eyes, drew the same from them in abundance. Besides, the things He had spoken were in their Nature such, as could not but raise a great Concern in them. They were Witnesses to the Truth of all those Appeals He had made to them, their Consciences bore Testimony to the shining Holiness of his Example
the

the mighty Travails of his Soul ; the immense Pains He had taken with them Night and Day ; and the Manner after which he had in all things fulfill'd the Work of his Ministry among them. No Man could do more, and they despair'd of ever meeting with his Equal : They were sensible how faithful a Friend and how great a Blessing they were now to part with, and were conscious how much they should miss his Counsel, his Authority, and his Example after He was gone ; especially upon his having given them that unwelcome and startling Assurance, *That after his Departure, grievous Wolves would enter in among them not sparing the Flock.*

These Considerations and more which might be added, do sufficiently justify the great Affliction they were under. A less Degree of Sorrow, had fail'd in its proportion to the greatness of the Mercy they were losing ; and none at all, would have argu'd the most amazing Stupidity. From the Account here given we may briefly observe the following Things.

1st, The Tenderneſs of their Affection. It was unto Tears. So it is uſed to be at the parting of loving Friends. *They wept.*

2^{dly}, The Univerſality of it, *They ALL wept*, not one of the whole Company could refrain. It was a general Lamentation.

3^{dly}, The Degree of it. *They all wept SORE.* It was as if their Hearts had been broken. *Rivers of Water* ran down their *Eyes*. They were moſt deeply and paſſionately affected.

4^{thly}, The Love and Gratitude that was mingled with their Affection. *They fell on Paul's*

Paul's Neck and kissed him. Shewing thereby the Endearment of their Affection, and the grateful Sense they had of all his kind Offices, rendering to God and him, a thousand and ten thousand Thanks for the immense Pains He had taken, and the great Good they had reaped by his Ministry.

5^{thly} And lastly, The special Circumstance that affected them above all the rest. *Sorrowing most of all for the Word which he spake, that they should see his Face no more.* Every thing He said was very moving and went near their Hearts, but this was the most cutting Word of all. Might they have had his Presence continu'd with them, or had He told them, that his Absence was to be only for a Time; that He would come and visit them again; this would have very much alleviated their Sorrow. But that it should be the last Interview, that after this *they should see his Face no more*; it affected them to the last Degree, and made their Sorrow like a River overflowing all its Banks. Methinks, I see them each one after another, going to pay their last Salutes, and like disconsolate Persons passionately casting themselves upon his Neck, embracing and kissing him; each one lamenting in the most bitter manner, his own and the common Loss, by the Removal of One that God had made the greatest Instrument of Blessing that ever was among them. It was hard parting, manifested by all the Marks of a visible and deep Sorrow. It made the Farewel (as Mr. Henry observes in his *Annotations*) just like a Funeral, and put them into the greatest
Passion

Passion of Weeping. For when our Friends (and we may say our godly Ministers) are separated from us by Death, this is that Consideration with which we raise up our Mourning, that *we shall see their Faces no more.*

This Passage being a Part of the Holy Scriptures that were written for *our Instruction and Learning*, I would speak to the following Proposition as suitable to the present melancholy Occasion.

The Removal of a godly and useful Minister, whether by Death, or so as never to see his Face more, is a great Loss, and much to be lamented.

The Removal of the Apostle *Paul*, was not that which is caused by Death. Had it been so, it had farther aggravated their Affliction exceedingly. He was only removed for great and glorious Service elsewhere, that He might spread the Gospel in other Parts; at *Jerusalem* and even as far as *Rome*. And therefore, tho' the Absence of such an extraordinary Person, was Matter of great Sorrow to the *Ephesians*, who had enjoy'd the Benefit of his Presence and Labours; yet they had reason to rejoyce, and no doubt they did so in their after Reflections, for the more general Good and the farther spreading of the Gospel, that was to be promoted by his Departure. Besides, He did not leave them, till they were sufficiently instructed in the Mind

of

of GOD, and were brought under that Order and Government; as to be capable by their own Care and Diligence, to preserve the inestimable Treasure of the Gospel He left them in Possession of. And notwithstanding they were to see his Face no more, yet He did not hereby become as one wholly dead or intirely useles to them; for tho' absent, He was still mindful of them, having them in affectionate Remembrance, *and not ceasing to make mention of them in his Prayers*, Eph. i. 16. And He was in other respects very serviceable to them, particularly by Letter; for when a *Prisoner*, Eph. iii. 1. He sent the excellent Epistle inscribed to them which is inserted in the sacred Canon, namely, that to the *Ephesians*; all which did not a little contribute to their Comfort, and were very beneficial and useful to them. Had they at this time been invited to attend his Funeral, it would have render'd the Case still more grievous. But He liv'd a good while after this, and was preserv'd to be a wonderful Blessing to the Church of GOD, in establishing and enlarging the Interest of Christ in every Country and every Place where He came.

The greatest Loss then of all is, when useful Ministers are separated from us by Death, because by this Means both we and the Church of GOD, are not only depriv'd of their Persons, but of all farther Benefit from their Labours, and hereby the Loss becomes a total one, and as great as it can be. But that I may speak more particularly to this Subject, I shall,

I. Premise a Reflection or two to the better understanding of what I shall chiefly enlarge upon.

II. Give some Reasons wherefore we ought to esteem the Death of a godly useful Minister to be a great Loss and much to be lamented.

III. Offer a few Things briefly for our Support and Comfort under it.

IV. And lastly, add some Directions in Order to the getting it repair'd and made up again.

I. Premise a Reflection or two for the better understanding of what I shall chiefly enlarge upon.

The *first* is, That you are not to suppose, I place the Removal of an ordinary Minister upon a Level with that of an inspir'd Apostle. 'Tis certain we have all had a great Loss in our deceased Brother, and you of this Congregation in a particular Manner; yet it is nothing like that which the Churches of *Asia* sustain'd in parting with St. *Paul*. Alas! What is the best Man now living compar'd with an Apostle? What the People said to *David* may with great Justice and Propriety be used here. *Thou art worth ten thousand of us*, 2 Sam. xviii. 3.

We are to distinguish between the extraordinary and ordinary Ministers of Christ. The Apostles were Men of extraordinary Qualifications, their Office special, their Endowments eminent and singular; to fit them for the first

planting of the Churches. They were sent for special Ends and Purposes, which when obtain'd their Office ceas'd. After the Gospel had been preach'd to the World, Churches planted, and the Christian Religion more generally receiv'd; those extraordinary Gifts and Powers did gradually cease which were granted to the first Publishers of it, and God has been pleas'd to maintain his Church by Men of inferior Endowments, whose Places when they die may be more easily filled up. You are therefore to understand me speaking only of what relates to this latter Sort, I mean the Death of an ordinary Minister of Christ; which tho' it is by no means to be overlook'd, falls vastly short of the Instance in my Text. And yet I must observe, that as *there are diversities of Gifts*, 1 Cor. xii. 4. and these dispens'd in various Measures, by Means of which there is a Difference in Mens Talents and Usefulness; so in Proportion to what God has given them, we are to make an Estimate of our Loss whenever it pleases Him to remove them from us.

Secondly, It is not to be expected that in ordinary Cases People should be affected to the same Degree as those in my Text. The Reason is, because there is not the like Concurrence of Circumstances to work upon the tender Passions, nor such ample Causes for an Affliction and Sorrow in all respects equal to theirs. Tho' the deceased was a faithful Minister of Christ, and God had honour'd him to do much Good in the little Time He was among you; Yet, if here present, I know I should not offend him by saying,

ing, He was in all respects unspeakably beneath the Person whose Departure was so much and so universally bewail'd at *Miletus*. It is not to be imagin'd, that the Death of an inferior Officer should be equally lamented with that of a General.

There is a Difference also in other regards. Our deceased Brother had not those Notices given him beforehand, which might have afforded him the Opportunity of taking his final Leave of you with that Formality, and in such a solemn Manner as the Apostle did. Indeed, if when He last appear'd in this Pulpit, He could have told you, that it would most certainly be the last Sermon He should preach, and those the last Prayers He should offer with you ; and that afterwards you should see his Face no more : As this would doubtless have very much affected his own Heart, and furnish'd him with many Thoughts and Expressions, that would have been exceeding tender and peculiarly moving ; so 'tis very likely the same would have drawn Tears from many of your Eyes, or made this Assembly even like that at *Miletus* : But this not being the Case, nor the Circumstances of the present Providence the same with theirs, it is not to be expected that you should in all regards discover an equal Concern. It will be happy, considering the great Indolency of the present Generation, if you are affected to a Degree that is suitable and decent. In order to excite such a Concern in you. I proceed,

II. *To give the Reasons why we should esteem*

esteem the Death of a godly useful Minister a great Loss and much to be lamented. The Limits to which I am confin'd will not allow me to say all that might be offer'd under this Head, or enlarge as the Nature of the Subject deserves. I shall only mention those which I judge to be most considerable, and such as will take in the Circumstances of the present Providence. The Death then of a godly Minister must be a great Loss.

1st, Because it is a *publick One*, of a momentous Nature and large Extent. This is one Consideration by which we are to make our Estimate of it. The more extensive and useful any Good is, the greater Concern should it raise in us when we are depriv'd of it, and that for the sake of others as well as our own. 'Tis but a just Regard we pay to those who die from among us, when we proportion our Sorrows according to the Relations they bore, the Capacities they were in, the Services they performed, and the rational, tho' melancholy Prospects we have of the Consequences of their Death.

Thus we lament the Removal of the Head of a Family, much more than that of an Infant, because it is a Blow at the Root, which oftentimes endangers the Tree, *i. e.* the Prosperity of the whole House; whereas the latter is but lopping off a Branch, which may soon be supply'd by the shooting forth of another in the Room of it. The Death of a useful Magistrate is more to be bewail'd than that of a private Person, because it is a great Loss to the Com-

Community, and the Consequences of it may be felt a long Time after. The same may be said of the Death of a godly Minister, which tho' it should not immediately and visibly affect in Matters of a civil Nature, it does most apparently in those of a Religious, which are still more important ; and even as to the former it has sometimes no small, though a remote Influence.

With respect to the Congregation to which He stood related, 'tis no less than God's *smitting the Shepherd*, which is of much greater Consideration than if he had taken away one of the Sheep, because in this Case the whole Flock suffers, and may be expos'd to no small Danger. Hereby not only his own House, but the House and Church of God is depriv'd of *a burning and shining Light*, one of its chief Ornaments, and an Instrument of special Use. His Family has indeed a great Affliction on several Accounts, which I need not name ; I believe you judge so in the present Case. May the God of all Consolation afford his seasonable Supports ! But it does not rest here. It goes farther and spreads wide.

A Minister is set up to be *a Light to the World*, Matth. v. 14. The end of his Office is to promote the chief Happiness of Mankind. When such an Instrument of Good is remov'd, it proves a great Loss to those under his immediate Care ; and oftentimes to the Neighbourhood, the City and Country where He liv'd ; according to the Fame He had acquir'd for Learning and Piety, and the Use which God

had

had made of him in promoting the noblest and highest Purposes of Religion. The Affliction is us'd to swell upon us in the Accounts that are given of him after his Death. It is so in the present Case. Many Things are then brought forth which before lay buried in Silence or were scarce heard of; and there are many more which still remain secret, and not to be reveal'd 'till the Judgment of the great Day. The Death of a godly Minister is for these Reasons a publick Loss, and in many respects an unknown one.

2^{dly}, It is *of a spiritual Nature*, and therefore the more to be lamented. Those things which affect us in our chief Interests, I mean the infinite Concerns of another World, have the greatest Claim to our Regard. Outward and temporal Losses are but of small Account, if rightly compar'd with those that relate to our Souls: And yet we see how deeply Men are for the most Part impress'd by them. If when travelling thro' unknown and difficult Ways, you should lose your Guide; when sailing amidst Rocks and Sands, the Pilot of the Ship should be taken from you; when perplex'd in Matters of Trade you should lose the Friend that was us'd to advise and supply you upon all Occasions; when under threatenng Indispositions of Body, your Physician who knew your Constitution, and had been always helpful to you should happen to die; it is easy to imagine in every Instance I have mention'd, how much you would be affected and concern'd: And does not the Loss of a godly Minister deserve your Lamentation, who, in spiritual Respects, was all that,
which

which these could be to you in temporal?

I conceive but one Thing, that with any Colour of Reason can be offer'd in reply to this; namely, that there are enough at Hand to supply in Case of Want. But are you apprehensive of no Damage that may accrue to you during the Time of your being destitute? And are you sure of obtaining one, who shall in all respects make up the Want of him that is taken from you? 'Till you be certain of this, (which you cannot presently be) you have reason to sorrow for his Death. God by removing your Minister has depriv'd you of a Soul Friend, a chief Help in spiritual Matters, and a great Instrument of heavenly Blessings. He has taken from you the Man whom He had sent as his Messenger, to make known to you the Gospel of his Son; *And how beautiful upon the Mountains are the Feet of him, that bringeth good Tidings, that publisheth Peace, that bringeth good Tidings of Good, that publisheth Salvation?* Isa. lii. 7.

This was the Person He seemed to have rais'd upon purpose to deliver you from the distracting Terrors of Hell and Damnation, and to prepare you for the everlasting Joys of Heaven and eternal Life. The Concerns with which he was principally entrusted were those of your precious Souls, and it is still more affecting to consider that his chief Obligations were among you. This was the Vineyard that was given him to dress, and the Garden that He was to manure and water. All the Abilities wherewith God had furnish'd him, were to be employ'd for you, that in all

spiri-

spirit
Affli
Feet
Wat
xx.
and
Pfal.
fully
1 Co
and
by e
the V
Soul
tant
cial
N
had
of i
respo
men
wait
Tea
leav
nefi
App
the
3
Los
thor
ties
T
Go
the

spiritual Things He might afford you his best Assistance and Help, as a *Guide directing your Feet into the Way of Peace*, Luke i. 79. A Watchman *Warning you of your Dangers*, Acts xx. 31. A Physician *binding up your Wounds and healing those that are broken in Heart*, Psal. cxxxvii. 3. Luke iv. 18. A Steward *faithfully dispensing to you the Mysteries of God*, 1 Cor. iv. 12. A Shepherd *overseeing the Flock and taking Care of you all*, Acts xx. 28. That by every thing in his Power he might promote the Welfare and Happiness of your immortal Souls. None could be sent on a more important Errand, or come to you on a more beneficial Design.

Now the greater the Blessing was whilst you had it, the greater is your Loss in being depriv'd of it. Those of you that know in how many respects God had made him a special Instrument of Good to your Souls, must needs bewail his Death. That which drew such Floods of Tears from those at *Miletus* when taking their leave of the Apostle, was the unspeakable Benefit they had gain'd under his Ministry, and the Apprehensions they had of never meeting with the like again.

3^{dly}, You are to make an Estimate of your Loss upon the Death of a godly Minister, from those Measures of Grace and ministerial Abilities that were bestowed upon Him.

Tho' none can justly pretend to be called of God to the honourable and difficult Work of the Ministry, who are not in some Degree qualified

lisy'd for it; yet there is a Diversity of Gifts, which are dispens'd in various Kinds and Measures, according to the Nature and Degree of that Service God has intended for them, and the particular Ends, which He may have in a more special Manner to subserve by them. But as the Worth of Means is to be valued according to their Aptitude and Use, so the more amply a Minister is qualified for his Work, and the more Use He is of, in answering the Ends of his holy Calling, the greater is their Privilege who enjoy the Benefit of his Labours, and the greater their Loss when He is call'd away from them. There are many Things, that offer themselves here to our Consideration, which if deliberately thought on, must affect a People upon the Death of their Minister, in proportion to the Degree in which he was conspicuous and noted for them. To name some,

If He was an *able Minister of the new Testament*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. *A Scribe well instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, that could bring out of his Treasure Things new and old*, Mat. xiii. 52. *A Workman that needed not to be ashamed, who rightly divided the Word of Truth*, 2 Tim. ii. 15.

An honest and faithful Man, *Who shunned not to declare all the Counsel of God*, Acts xx. 27. *Not walking in Craftiness, not handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the Truth, commended himself to every Man's Conscience, in the Sight of God*, 2 Cor. iv. 2.

A laborious Minister. That was intent upon his Work, whose chief Care was to *fulfil his Ministry, gladly spending and being spent*, in the Service of his Master, and in promoting the Good of his People, 2 Cor. xii. 15.

An humble tender spirited Person. *Ye know, after what Manner I have been with you, serving the Lord with all Humility of Mind, and with many Tears*, Acts xx. 19.

Of a condescending affectionate Temper. Who afforded the meanest of his Flock a Share in his tender Regards as well as the greatest, being *gentle unto all, even as a Nurse that cherisheth her Children*, 1 Thess. ii. 7.

A self-denying Minister. *That sought not his own, but the Things of Christ*, Phil. ii. 21. *Not yours, but you*, 2 Cor. xii. 14. *I have coveted no Man's Silver, or Gold, or Apparel*, Acts xx. 24.

A Son of Peace. A Pattern of Love himself, and a zealous Promoter of it as far as his Influences could reach. *Endeavouring*, (by all Christian Methods) *to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*.

A prudent Man. *Who knew how to rule his own House*, and to take Care of the Church of God, 1 Tim. iii. 4. Who was able to order his Affairs with Discretion, and to give proper Advice to others. I shall add but two Qualifications more in the last Place; namely,

If He was a suitable Minister. Nothing is of farther regard as a Means, than as it is fitted

to reach its End. A Wedge of Iron is of more Value, if of more Use, than one of Gold. He was the best Minister, that was best suited to the Place and People where God had cast his Lot. Especially

If He was a successful One, an Instrument of much Good to many Souls. *Ye are the Seal of mine Apostleship in the Lord, 1 Cor. ix. 1. Ye are our Epistle—known and read of all Men, for as much as ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ, ministered by us, 2 Cor. iii. 2, 3.*

Where this is the Case, where God has depriv'd a People of a Minister thus qualified, adorn'd, and own'd; every one must confess it to be a great Loss.

How far these excellent Qualifications did enter into the Character of the Deceased, I am willing to leave to the Judgment of those who were thoroughly acquainted with him; and if I may be allow'd to declare my own, I think I should do him wrong, did I not say, that in reference to the Particulars above mention'd, there are but few among us at this Day, that exceed him; and too many, I fear, that fall greatly short of him.

But besides those Things, which you yourselves, I doubt not, have been ready to apply to him, as I have nam'd them; there are many more that might be added*. But as great

* Several were here mention'd, which with more that have been since added, I have at the Desire of some special Friends and Relations, annex'd to the End of this Discourse.

Modesty was a Virtue, that attended him thro' his whole Life, and He was (as it has been told me) averse to long and large Harangues on Persons, and their Characters in Funeral Sermons; so I have been desir'd to be sparing in my Account of him, and to govern my self in what I should say on his own Death, by the Rule He himself observ'd on the Death of others. And tho' I see no Reason, why that which was praise-worthy, and truly exemplary in a *Minister*, should be conceal'd, (nor do I see any in this Case) yet I readily confess That to be the best Encomium of a departed Minister, which is utter'd with Tears and Sighs by the afflicted People, sadly lamenting their great Loss in the Death of One, whose Labours God had made exceeding beneficial to their Souls. The affectionate Kisses, which were so plentifully bestowed on the Apostle *Paul* at his leaving the Churches of *Asia*, and the Showers of Tears that were shed upon that Occasion; redounded more to his Praise, and had more of Oratory in them, than there would have been in the loftiest Strains of an artificial *Panegyrick*. I proceed to some other Considerations which may aggravate our Affliction upon the Death of an useful Minister. Therefore,

4^{thly}, The Circumstance of Time when God was pleas'd to call him away may add much to the Weight of it. There is scarce any thing tends more to heighten the Apprehensions we have of what befalls us, whether it be a Mercy or Affliction, than this particular.

Next

Next to the thing it self, this is what we are most apt in our after Reflections to descant and dwell upon. A Mercy that is great in itself, we account still greater for the *Seasonableness*, as well as Suitableness of it. So on the other Hand an Affliction is sometimes very much increas'd by the Circumstances of Time in which it happen'd. This if apply'd to the Death of a Minister will be very apparent. As for Instance,

If it was at a Time when a People were in the greatest Need of one of his Abilities and Endowments. At a Time when He gave the most delightful Prospect of singular Usefulness. At a Time when the Thoughts of his Death were remote from them, and every one pleas'd himself with the Expectation and Hope of a long Enjoyment of his Ministry. And at a Time when He had but just entred upon his Labours among them: Where these are the Circumstances of the Case, they make it a very sorrowful one.

I need not acquaint you, *my Brethren*, that there is a Concurrence of all these in the sad Providence that has befallen you, which cannot but cause Grief and Affliction in many. You have been depriv'd of my Brother at a Time you stood in need of one of his excellent Qualifications, God having almost quite disabled your Reverend aged Pastor by long and great Infirmities, and render'd him wholly incapable of discharging several Parts of his ministerial Function. Your State and Circumstances did very much

†

require

require one of his Piety, Knowledge, Experience, Prudence, and other Abilities, to be among you : So numerous an Assembly as this did loudly call for it.

But now, after God had provided you with one that was so well suited to the Exigencies of your Case ; one in whom you did generally acquiesce ; one whose Ministry grew daily more and more acceptable and useful ; in whom you rejoyc'd as those that had found *a Treasure that lay hid in a Field*, congratulating your selves and one another upon your Happiness, and many thought you to be greatly favour'd of God : That then, and under such Circumstances as these, He should be taken from you, is Matter ; of sorrowful Reflection : especially considering, that his Years, together with the Goodness of his Constitution, gave you reason to hope He might have continued yet a good while longer, and sav'd you many anxious Thoughts about a Successor to your reverend Pastor, who is wearing away apace thro' a Complication of Distempers. That you should enjoy him for so short a Space, only as that of two Years, or a little more ; That God should lend him to you but just so long as might raise a very high Esteem of his Worth : and then snatch him away when you least thought of it, is, I confess, somewhat extraordinary, and not a little surprising. Had He dy'd in a good old Age, worn out by the length as well as Excess of his Labours, you would have had no reason to wonder. But that He should be call'd away so quickly, just after He was brought from a small
Place

Place in the neighbouring Country where He had been strangely overlook'd, and now that a wide Door of much Service was opened to him, and He was in that Stage of Life, wherein a Minister must be reckon'd to have attain'd to the Height of all his Capacities for Usefulness: That God, I say, should call him away as it were in haste, when under these Circumstances; must to serious Persons appear to be a very dark and melancholy Providence. I hope you will all of you think your selves not a little concern'd to enquire and search into the Causes of it. But,

5^{thly}, You have reason to lament your Loss, because of the Uncertainty and Difficulty of getting it made up again. I believe there are many of you not without your Apprehensions and Concern on these Accounts. It is not so long, that you can have forgotten the Time it spent, and the Trouble you had in fixing my deceased Brother among you, which expos'd you to some Inconveniences.

Should you be long without a Minister, you may suffer on that Account. A Congregation may dwindle; Hearers drop away, and the Members themselves disperse when they have not a settled Minister to attend upon.

On the contrary should you be too precipitant and hasty, That may be prejudicial to you.

* [I mention it with a just Concern that the

* What is set here in Brackets, I understand has given Offence to some, that have heard of it, which has oblig'd me to have it printed Word for Word as it was preach'd. I confess it is in a plain and homely Stile, which has made me reflect on that Saying of Terence, *Obsequium amicos Veritas odium parit*. But if any think there was no reason for the Caution, I must crave leave to differ from them.

Cir-

Circumstances of the Dissenters, are not the same that they have been in former Times. You have reason to look about you, to be diligent in your Enquiries, and to know your Man thoroughly before you fix your Choice. Some of our Churches of late have thought themselves very well supply'd with their Ministers, and yet afterwards have been forc'd to part with those very Ministers. Some have not been so sound, others not so good as they should be. I speak not this, the Lord knows, as having any Delight in Reflection, but as judging it necessary by way of Caution, and I wish with all my Heart there were no Occasion for it. Your Difficulties may be great on these Accounts.]

Again you may be divided in your Opinions and Sentiments about one to succeed. Have you not met with something of this already? A Difference in Sentiments about a Minister, may, (unless there be a great deal of Grace and Prudence) excite Contentions; and when a Fire is begun, the Enemy will be diligent in blowing the Coals. Thro' these Contentions, Persons may fall at last to opposing one another out of Pride, Humour, Passion, and Party-Interest, and when Matters are come to this pass, a Church is in the greatest Danger of dividing and being broken to pieces.

Besides all this, it may be uncertain, and difficult to find one that shall in all respects give you the Satisfaction you had in him that is remov'd. Supposing you meet with one that shall equal him in Furniture and ministerial Abilities,

E

yet

yet he may fall short of him in the Humility, Meekness, Tenderneſs, and Sweetneſs of his Temper; He may fall ſhort of him in Experience and Prudence. Or grant He prove a more able Preacher (which to find may be ſomewhat difficult) yet He may not under that Character be altogether ſo ſuitable to you. Or allow him to be as able and ſuitable, who knows whether GOD will give him the like Succeſs.

Theſe are Suggestions that I have thought proper to mention as ſo many Grounds and Reaſons why People (and you eſpecially) ought to be impreſſed with a ſenſible Grief and Affliction, upon their being depriv'd of an able, ſuitable and ſucceſſful Miniſter. It may be a good while, and not without much Difficulty, e'er their Loſs can be made up to them, yea it is uncertain whether in all reſpects it ſhall ever be ſo. One Conſideration which put thoſe at *Miletus* into ſuch a Paſſion of weeping, upon their parting with the Apoſtle *Paul*, was, no doubt, the Apprehenſion they had of never meeting again with ſuch another. But,

6^{thly}, Another Conſideration that ought to affect you, is the Fear left GOD may have depriv'd you of him in Diſpleaſure. The Death of a godly Miniſter may be an Indication of Wrath, and when it is thus it is a ſore Caſe. It may be, and is ſometimes, a Preſage of dreadful Judgment coming on a People. After a faithful Shepherd is taken away, a grievous Wolf may be permitted to come in his room, who inſtead of feeding the Flock ſhall devour

and d
of th
obſerv
them
my de
mong
was ſt
your o
verſe
them.

Be
Mini
and I
he re
are c
Adm
Con
Mini
may
Sodo
ſome
not
Wh
vent
and
upon
eſt
Hea
mer
ot o
ii. r
Co
mo

and destroy it. Those Words in the 29th verse of this Chapter went near their Hearts, as I observed in opening of the Text, and griev'd them Exceedingly. *I know this, that after my departing, shall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not sparing the Flock.* And which was still more cutting, He farther adds, *Also of your own selves shall Men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them.*

Besides, the lessening the Number of holy Ministers may in some Cases be an Indication and Presage of Judgments on a Nation. When he removeth his Watchmen, and their Mouths are closed, who were used to be our faithful Admonishers; we have All, reason to fear the Consequence of it. GOD's taking away his Ministers by a premature and untimely Death, may be like the Angels hastening of *Lot* out of *Sodom* that was devoted to Destruction; He sometimes houses his Servants, that they may not see the Evil He is bringing on the Earth. When those are called away, who by their fervent Prayers have obtain'd many a Blessing, and averted the Execution of many a Judgment upon the Nation, it affords matter of the deepest Affliction. Upon *Elijah's* being taken to Heaven, *Elisba* cried out, making bitter Lamentation, *My Father, my Father, the Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof,* 2 Kin. ii. 12. q. d. He is gone, who by his Example, Counsels, Prayers, and Power with God, did more for the Defence and Preservation of *Isra-*
E 2
el,

el, than they could otherwise have done with all their armed Force. That Nation is reduc'd to a sad Extremity, which lies like a Field with its Hedge broken down, and there are none to repair it. Judgments are breaking in upon them, and they, who had Power with God in Prayer, are taken away. *I sought for a Man among them that should make up the Hedge, and stand in the Gap before me for the Land, that I should not destroy it ; but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine Indignation, I have consumed them with the Fire of my Wrath, their own way have I recompensed upon their Heads, saith the Lord God, Ezek. xxii. 31.* I shall add but one Consideration more that lies expressly before us in the Text. And this is,

7^{thly}, And lastly, That the Loss of a godly useful Minister is a great Loss and much to be lamented, because when taken away by Death, you shall see him no more. This was the Consideration that gave the greatest Accent to the Grief of those in my Text, upon their parting with the Apostle. *They sorrowed most of all for the Word which He spake, that they should see his Face no more ;* not merely because they should be depriv'd of his bodily Presence, but as that would bereave them of his Ministry and the Benefit of his Labours.

Your Minister is gone, never to return again, 'till we all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ. He hath finished his Work upon Earth, and an Ehd^s is put to his ministerial Services here.

here. There are those I doubt not who, having lost their faithful Ministers, would be glad to travel many Miles to see and hear them again; but the Separation that is made by Death, cuts off all Expectation of that Kind. We are generally most sensible of the Worth of our Mercies in the Want of them. How God may deal with particular Persons, or Families, or with a Church after the Death of their Minister; or what may be the State of Things with reference to the Publick, what Calamities may come upon us as a Nation, is a Secret. But this is certain, that whatever be your Circumstances, you will never have him more among you, to afford you his Help and Assistance. In how many Instances soever God was pleased to render his Ministry profitable to you, they are now at an End, so far as they respect him. You'll have him no more as a publick Instructor, or as a private Friend. Whilst He continu'd with you, He was a *burning and a shining Light*, and you *rejoyced* in it. But He is now taken out of the *Candlestick*, and gone to *shine in the Kingdom of his Father*. He will be with you no more to inform your Minds, to instruct you in your Duty, to dispense the Bread of Life to you, to advise you by his Counsels, to answer your Difficulties, to help you in your Temptations, to pity, pray for, and comfort you under all your bodily and spiritual Afflictions. I am satisfy'd there are not a few, who remember how serviceable He was to them in all these Regards. But now you can have no

farther Benefit from him. You'll see him no more for these Ends and Purposes, how much soever his Presence might be desir'd by you. His next Appearance will be in the Capacity of a *Witness*, either for, or against you, and an *Assessor* with Christ in Judgment. In this World you *will see his Face no more*.

By this Time I hope I have sufficiently confirm'd the Argument I laid down. And I have insisted upon all these Things, on purpose to affect your Hearts with a becoming Sense of what has befallen you, in order hereby to awaken your Consideration, and dispose you to hearken to the *Voice* of this *Rod*, and *him that hath appointed it*. The afflictive Dispensation you are under is a speaking Dispensation. There is a loud Voice in it. May God help you to understand the Things which are spoken by it, that you *may lay them to Heart and give Glory to Him*, by all the Acts of a sincere Humiliation.

I have been inform'd, that your Reverend aged Pastor, (who must be suppos'd to know your State and Circumstances better than I do, and might challenge your Regard beyond what I shall pretend to) did excite you the last Lord's Day to examine your selves, to search your Hearts, your Houses, and all things that relate to you in order to find out the Sins, which may have provoked God to lay you under so severe a Providence, and contend with you in the Manner He hath done. This does excuse my saying any thing farther to you of the like Tendency.

I only make it my earnest Request and Prayer that you would *humble your selves under the* mighty Hand of GOD. That you would not only mourn for the great Blessing you have been so soon and unexpectedly depriv'd of, at a Time, and under such Circumstances, as make your Loss exceeding great; but that you would mourn chiefly and principally for the Sins which have procur'd it.

Did it evidently appear, that you are truly sensible of the Lord's Hand being stretch'd out against you, and that you are rightly affected under this melancholy and threatening Dispensation; it would give good ground to hope, that tho' at present He has made a sore Breach upon you, yet in due Time He will repair and make it up again. Therefore, that I may not leave you altogether comfortless, I shall say something to the,

III. General I propos'd, which is to shew you *what may be offer'd for your Support and Comfort under your great Affliction*. I can do little more than name Things. It should yield you Comfort to know and be assured,

1st, That tho' GOD has taken from you an under Shepherd, you are still under the Care of the Lord Jesus Christ, the chief Shepherd and Bishop of Souls. Such of you as are his Sheep indeed, may rest assur'd, that He will not be wanting in his Concern for you. Tho' our deceased Friend can be of no farther Service to
you,

you, yet Christ knows all your Circumstances and all your Wants. You are still under his Eye, and upon his infinitely tender Heart, as those, that are given him of the Father, and lodg'd as a Trust in his Hands. He knows every one of you by Name, and is ever careful of you. *I know my Sheep, and I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand,* John x. 28. This should comfort those of you that truly fear God. Tho' afflicted under your Loss, yet be not wholly discourag'd. You are still in safe Hands. For,

2^{dly}, He is at the Head of all Affairs, and is the wise, as well as arbitrary Disposer of all Things. If you are duly humbled under the present Providence He can make up your Loss, not only in all respects as before, but with Advantage. He that hath ordained Officers for his Church, can order, appoint, and send one to you, who shall still carry on the Purposes of his Grace concerning you, yea thro' his Blessing do it more effectually than ever. The Hearts of Ministers are in his Hands, both to incline direct and influence them as He pleases.

3^{dly}, The *Residue of the Spirit* is with Him, to qualify and raise up others in the Room of those He hath taken from us. Men of equal Abilities in all regards, and if need be, superior to them. *All Power is given unto Him in Heaven and in Earth,* for the good of His Church, *Matth. xxviii. 18. He hath ascended on high, He hath led Captivity captive, He hath received Gifts*
for

for Men, to dispense to every one severally as He pleases.

4^{thly}, He is full of Compassion, and feelingly touched with his People's Wants. *When He saw the Multitudes, He was moved with Compassion on them because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as Sheep having no Shepherd,* Matth. ix. 36. He is that good Shepherd which laid down his Life for his Sheep, and having purchased them with his Blood, He will not fail to make suitable Provision for them. When it appears to be otherwise, 'tis a Sign that Christ has but little Interest in those Flocks.

5^{thly}, And lastly, He has bound himself by Promise to take care of his People. He will have a Church, and has given his Word that the *Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*; Matth. xvi. 18. If so, He will not forget to provide it with proper Officers who shall maintain and defend it. He has promised to be *with his Ministers always to the End of the World*; so long then as He hath a Church in the World, it shall not be left wholly destitute of proper Persons to minister unto it. He that bids us, *pray the Lord of the Harvest, that He will send forth Labourers into his Harvest*, Matth. ix. 38. will take Care that such Prayers be answered. See you do not by your Sins render your selves unworthy of Ministers, and you shall not be in want of them.

Well then, my Friends, you that are seriously affected with the Sense of your Loss, be not dejected or overwhelm'd as in a Case that is

F

wholly

wholly remediless. Be you found in the Way of your Duty, and you shall not be in want of Mercy ; as to this Particular Christ will provide for you. But if for the Sins of others, He shall leave you under a Cloud as a Congregation; yet as to those of you, that truly belong to him, you shall be precious to him, and ever on his Mind for good.

I might now say something for the Comfort of his Family : But they were so well instructed by him that is gone, as makes me hope, they are for that reason in less need of my Help. The Widow knows that *the Lord will be her Husband*, and may she by Faith cast her *Fatherless Children upon him*. May the Children follow the good Instructions and Example of their godly Father ! And then this Affliction, tho' the bitterest they ever met with, shall turn to their good. The same Lord that has the Care of Churches, has the Care also of pious Families. What is wanting in my Counsel, I desire to make up in my Prayers for them.

IV. *I Conclude all with a Word, or two by way of Direction.*

1st, Lament your Sins, 'till you shall have reason to believe that God has pardon'd them; and never cease praying 'till He has set you on praising Him for the repairing of this Breach.

2^{dly}, Remember and improve the seasonable Instructions, Counsels, and Exhortations you had from your deceased Minister during that Space of Time He was with you.

3^{dly},

3^{dly}, Improve what Help you may yet have by the Will of God from your aged Pastor who still survives.

4^{thly}, And lastly, Be at Peace among your selves. Beware of all those Evils for time to come, that gave you so much Trouble and Disturbance in the Choice of him that is taken from you.

And now, Brethren, I commend you to God, and the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them that are sanctified.





SOME
ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIFE and CHARACTER

Of the REVEREND

Mr. *William Hocker.*



IT is to be wish'd, that in order to do Justice to so good a Man and so worthy a Minister, I could have made use of his own Memorials; which would have furnish'd me no doubt with a much more ample and entertaining Account, than for want of them, I am capable of giving: But they being in Characters not to be explain'd, we must content ourselves with such things only, as lay open to the Observation of all that knew him; except some Particulars, which I have receiv'd from his most intimate Friends and old Acquaintance, and some

some I can attest my self, having known him for about the Space of forty Years.

He was born of very religious and reputable Parents, at *Trelill* near *Wardbridge* in *Cornwal*; and sent to Grammar-Learning under the Care of the Reverend Mr. *Joseph Halsey*, a pious and worthy Divine in that Neighbourhood. * ‘The want of a convenient School had put him upon teaching his own Children: And this was no sooner known, than his House was throng’d with Gentlemen’s Sons of the best Rank: How well He discharg’d that Trust, many Gentlemen and Ministers, Conformists as well as others, will readily testify.” As He was a good Judge of the Capacities of his Scholars, and the Prospect they gave of future usefulness; so from what he observ’d in our deceased Friend of an uncommon Seriousness and Diligence, accompanied with a peculiar sweetness of Temper, He signify’d it as his Opinion to his Parents, that it might be of considerable Service to the Church of God, if they devoted him to the Ministry, which accordingly they did.

When a very little Child, he was observ’d to retire often by himself. Great notice was taken of the Meekness of his Spirit. In his Diversions he took great Delight in acting the Part of a Minister: ’Tis said of *Athanasius* †,

* See Dr. *Calamy* in his Account of the ejected Ministers, &c. Vol. II. p. 148.

† See Dr. *Carve*’s History of the Fathers, and *Gaussenus* quoting this Passage to the same purpose, in his *Dissertation De Sindi Theologici Ratione*.

that *Alexander* then Bishop of *Alexandria* having observ'd him in play to imitate the Function of a Bishop; He committed him to his Parents with a solemn Charge, they should give him an Education that might render him fit for the Office. If any regard is to be had to such a Circumstance, as an early Indication of the special Work and Service a Person is intended for, it was conspicuous in our deceased Brother.

When at School he had a very narrow Escape from drowning. Running with others along the Sands on the Sea Shore, in eager Pursuit of a Fox that was chas'd down thither, the Tide flowing in, He was by a Wave suddenly wash'd into the Sea, and thro' the Force of it so grovel'd in the Sand at bottom, that with great Difficulty He was recover'd, not without hazard of Life to those that ran presently to his Assistance. This Deliverance made a deep Impression on his Mind: He us'd to mention it with great thankfulness, and was very cautious ever after of venturing on that Element.

It pleas'd God to honour him, who first advis'd his Education for the Ministry, to be the Instrument of his Conversion when a Lad at School; so early was he prepar'd as a *Vessel of Honour sanctify'd unto the Master's Use*. The thorough change of his Mind, He dated from a Sermon deliver'd by his Master, (who was an excellent Preacher as well as Instructor of Youth) under which He was so exceedingly affected, that

that He was forc'd to retire into a Field to disburthen and vent himself. He has often signify'd how much he us'd to be impress'd by his Ministry, but this was a Season above all the rest, which He could never forget. An intimate Friend has acquainted me, That under the Exercises of his Mind it was usual with him to retire into by Places, and thro' the Excesses of Grief and Joy alternate, He would be so engag'd as to forget to eat his Bread ; such was his Concern and the abstraction of his Thought, that He deny'd himself the necessary Reliefs that Nature call'd for. By a great Pain in his Head, which was occasion'd by a fall upon the Ice, He was depriv'd of an excellent tenacious Memory, that scarce lost any thing once receiv'd that was worth keeping, and this oblig'd him to pen his Sermons to his dying Day.

Having pass'd thro' Grammar-Learning, He was by his School-master's Recommendation sent to *London*, and plac'd under the Tuition of Mr. *Charles Morton* * who then kept a private Academy at *Newington Green*, and who was likewise my honoured Tutor, till the Time I went abroad. The Remembrance of this worthy Person will not suffer me to mention his Name but with the greatest Veneration and Esteem. It was here that I had the Happiness of my first Acquaintance with Mr. *Hocker*.

In his Behaviour at this Place, He was an Example of great Seriousness ; noted for his Gift

* See a just Account of him by Dr. *Calamy*, Vol. II. p. 214.

in Prayer at that early Age; for the natural sweetness of his Temper and his diligent Application to Study. The Improvement He made in Knowledge, and the laudable Manner in which He perform'd his Exercises, gave his Tutor and his Friends a pleasing prospect of future Usefulness. A young Gentlewoman from *Barbadoes* related to his Tutor was much wrought upon by the Example of his Piety, who with her Mother upon their Return to that *Island* was taken by a *Sallee Man*, and carried away Captive to *Mequinez*. They were stript of all they had, only the Daughter found Means to keep a *Manuscript* of Christian Counsel and Advice, which Mr. *Hocker*, when she left *England*, drew up for her Use, as a Directory of Life *. The Mother after she had liv'd several Years in Captivity with her Daughter, was set at Liberty, but the latter was oblig'd to continue. When she came to *England* she declar'd, of how great Use that small Piece of Mr. *Hocker's*, was both to her and her Daughter in their Affliction, it being the only *Memoran-*

* The young Gentlewoman was presented to the Emperor of *Fez* and *Morocco*, who was so taken with her Beauty, that no Means of Allurement were unessay'd to make her renounce her Religion, which not prevailing, she was beaten in a most barbarous Manner, her Skin laid open in several Places and fill'd with Gunpowder which they set Fire to; yet all this while she continu'd steadfast. When they had almost kill'd her. the Emperor said he would take her as she was. Accordingly he married her, and she became one of his four Queens (their voluptuous Religion allowing four Wives, whose Children have [as I am inform'd] a right to Inheritance) and as many other Women as they please. See *Le Clerc's* historical Dictionary,

dum they were suffer'd to have with them of Christianity.

At the latter End of King *Charles's* Reign, Mr. *Morton* was so infested with Proceſſes from the Biſhop's Court, as forc'd him to deſiſt from his Employment, and retire to *New England*; which occaſion'd Mr. *Hocker's* return to his native Country, where he purſu'd his private Studies: and God made him of Uſe to ſettle Affairs among his Relations to their mutual Satisfaction, which He has taken Notice of as a favourable Providence. During his ſtay there, his Prudence and Piety gain'd him a great Eſteem among thoſe He convers'd with. His worthy learned Friend and Countryman, to whom I am oblig'd for ſeveral Particulars in this Account, acquaints me, that the firſt Impreſſions he had of Eſteem for him were when he was about the 13th Year of his Age, and about the Time Mr. *Hocker* had finiſh'd his Academical Studies; when being at his Father's Home, He was taken Notice of to him by his godly Parents as a great Exemplar, in whom the Grace of God ſhined forth with uncommon Luſtre, that claim'd the Attention of all with whom He convers'd, and left a ſweet Odour behind him, when He came to this City. [London] Thro' a long Series of Years that he never ſaw his Face, he did not forget thoſe Impreſſions he receiv'd from him in his Childhood.

After ſome time ſpent in *Cornwal*, his native Country, He came back to *London*, reſolving now to engage in ſuch initiatory Services as

might farther qualify him for the Work of the Ministry to which He had devoted himself, as well as He had been devoted by his Parents. The Work he first engag'd in was that of a Chaplain to a worthy Family at *Edmonton*; where, besides his daily Exercise, He was us'd to preach a Sermon every Lord's-Day Evening, on which the People in the Neighbourhood were permitted to attend, and God own'd him greatly.

Whilst officiating here, He receiv'd an Invitation to accept the pastoral Charge of a People at some Miles Distance. This gave no small Concern to the Family in which He resided, nor did it less to those in the Neighbourhood, who became importunate for his stay with them; but that which made the deepest Impression upon him was, the surprizing and numerous Accounts He receiv'd of the great Good He had done by his preaching among them. Whereupon his Aims being more at doing Good, than seeking great Things for himself, and finding his Heart to yearn most tenderly towards those among whom God had own'd him above what He imagin'd (as He told some grave and worthy Ministers with whom He consulted,) He did, with their Approbation and Advice, divert his Thoughts from hearkning to a Call elsewhere, and determin'd to settle with them; to many of whom, God had already made him a spiritual Father. Upon this Encouragement, He cheerfully took up with a small People of his own forming, and having been sometime after

regularly set apart for the Work of the Ministry, He became the successful Instrument of laying the first Foundations of a Church in that Place, which thro' the wonderful Blessing of God upon his Labours, did afterwards *increase and multiply* beyond what could be expected.

There He continu'd for above thirty Years exercising as much Pains and Diligence, with a very mean and strait Allowance for most Part of the Time, as He could have done under the greatest Plenty of outward Encouragements. But what was wanting in this respect, God was pleas'd to make up to him in the Success of his Ministry; which Consideration was of greater Sway with him than any other whatsoever. Indeed the smallness and uncertainty of his Income, was sometimes a Discouragement to him, and inclin'd him to listen to the Proposals which were made him by his Friends for a Removal, but then He has observ'd, that when his Way did seem to lie open, God has been pleas'd at that very time to give him new Seals to his Ministry, which did so engage his Heart to that People, that He could not be prevail'd with to leave them.

To give a particular Relation of all the Instances in which God did signally bless his Ministry in this Place, would oblige me to write a large History. I have heard of several, who from poor ignorant, illiterate, extremely stupid Creatures, by his Instruction and Care, did become knowing, judicious, prudent and useful Christians. Others, being vain, carnal, loose

and vicious Persons, were captivated to the Faith and Obedience of Christ. Others, that have come out of mere Curiosity have been so taken with his Ministry, that they could not leave it, nor could any Dissuasions or Threatnings of Friends withhold them from it, and have afterwards proved very serious and exemplary Christians.

Nor was his Ministry more noted for its Power to strike the Conscience, than it was for healing it when wounded ; not more for bringing in of wandring Souls, than building up of those who were once brought in. There are none that had any Taste of serious Religion, or had sat for any Time under his Ministry, but must be ready to attest this. Instances are well known of those who under great Fears and Doubts about their spiritual State, have receiv'd much Peace and Comfort by his Discourses when they could not get it elsewhere. A Person of some Note and Figure, who had been long under Trouble of Mind, and durst not come to the Lord's Table, being cast by the Providence of God under his Ministry, at a Time when that Ordinance was to be administered, receiv'd so much Satisfaction from the Sermon He preach'd before it, as to desire Admission, and found unspeakable Comfort in renewing her Covenant with God.

I mention this the rather, for a special Circumstance that attended it in relation to himself, which was, that this Discourse by which He answer'd so fully the Doubts of this poor
afflicted

afflicted Gentlewoman, He was directed to in a particular Manner. Having chosen another Text to preach upon, his Thoughts were so hamper'd and perplex'd about it, He could not go forward, but was compell'd at last to think on another. And that which He preach'd upon, occurring to his Mind, He no sooner began upon it, than his Thoughts flow'd in faster than his Pen could write, and He never made a Sermon with more Ease and Expedition in his Life. I do not observe this as peculiar to himself, but to shew that we Ministers may sometimes by the secret Hand of God be diverted from what we design'd to something else, on purpose to meet with some particular Persons and Cases that we little think of.

Whilst God was pleased thus to own his Servant labouring with small Encouragement in his Vineyard, the Care He took of him in his Providence is also to be taken Notice of. There are none who make Observation, but in the Occurrences of Life will have Occasion to remark the Concern of Providence in their Preservation. Many things of this Nature were doubtless observ'd by our Brother, which for the Reason first mention'd we can't attain to the knowledge of. I shall only relate an Instance or two which were known to his Friends. In the Time of his being at *Edmonton*, a Fire happen'd in a Barn very near to his dwelling House, and but a few Feet distant from a small wooden Tenement He had purchased. God order'd it so, that both were preserv'd, whilst an House on the
oppo-

opposite side of the Road, and at a great Distance, was consum'd by the Fury of the Flames. Many reflected upon this as a special Providence. Our Brother was so sensible of it, that He resolv'd that little Tenement should never be demolish'd during his Life, but stand as a Monument to him of the preserving Goodness of God. At another time a wicked Wretch planted himself in a Lane thro' which He was us'd to pass, with a full Resolution, that if He came that Way, he would be his Death. He was unaccountably diverted from returning home thro' that Lane as his Custom was, and thereby preserv'd. He knew not his Danger, 'till some time after, when this poor Creature sent for him as he lay a dying, and in great Horror of Conscience confess'd it to him, and earnestly begg'd his Prayers.

I come now to the last Stage of his Life, which was his Remove from *Edmonton* to *London*. The Person who was a great Instrument in his Call hither has acquainted me, that when he made his first Address to him concerning this Matter, He answer'd to the Effect following: *That He was at the Dispose of his great Master, that He would see his Call very clear before He would accept; and therefore, desir'd time to weigh the Proposition.* It was a considerable Interval before that Person met him again, during which, He sought the Lord earnestly, consulted several of his faithful Friends and Brethren, weigh'd all things duly, and upon the whole, there appear'd many Things and

Cir-

Circumstances, which being put together, gave him reason to conclude that his Call was clear. One Consideration, among many others, which did greatly tend to make him easy upon his Removal was this, That whereas 'till of late the Allowance of his People was so small, that had He left them there was not sufficient to encourage a fit Person to come and settle among them ; now, Matters were upon a much better Foot, and in such a Condition, as to remove that Objection, and with it the Fear of his People's remaining destitute of a Supply.

Upon his first coming to the People where He finish'd his Labours, He was acceptable to most, and at last to all, even many that oppos'd his coming: And from so many Ways, and so many Persons, did He frequently hear of the Success of his Ministry ; that it not only confirm'd him in his Removal and gave him Peace of Mind, but made him abundantly joyful. The Congregation, that thro' the bodily Infirmities of their aged Pastor ; the want of suitable Assistance ; and other Incidents, had been under some Discouragements, were much reviv'd and comforted. Great was the Satisfaction, the People had in so worthy a Person to assist them, nor was that less on his side, which He had in them. But when all things appear'd to their mutual Wishes, and there seem'd to be nothing wanting to make a Minister and People happy in one another ; the one going on chearfully and prosperously in his Work, and the other partaking largely of the pleasant and profit-

profitable Fruits of his Labours, then it pleased God, (*who is righteous in all his Ways, and holy in all his Works*, even those that are above our searching out) after the short Space of two Years or a little more, unexpectedly to call home this his Servant, when in the midst of his greatest Usefulness, leaving the aged Pastor of the Congregation behind, who was grown almost wholly useless, weary of Life, and longing for a Release. Some time before his Death He took Cold, which was increas'd upon his going to pay a Visit to an honoured Person at a small Distance in the Country, where He spent the Lord's Day, and tho' indispos'd preach'd both Parts of it. Upon his Return, He was seiz'd with a violent Fever, which after a few Days Sickness put an End to his Life on the 12th of *December* 1721, and in the 59th Year of his Age.



HIS CHARACTER.

A few Words of this shall conclude my Account.

THE Excellency of his natural Temper, with the Grace of God superadded to it, has given him the Advantage in Character above many. His early Conversion preserv'd him

him from those Blemishes of Life, which many holy Men have confess'd with shame, and lamented to their dying Day. As He fear'd God not only from his Youth but Childhood, so his whole Life appear'd to be one continu'd Thread and even Tenour of serious and unaffected Godliness. Sincerity being the Thing He aim'd at, nothing seem'd more contrary to his Temper than an Air of Vanity and Ostentation. Every thing He did was cover'd with a Veil of Modesty. Those things which pass'd between God and his Soul being conceal'd in Characters, we can say nothing of him but what was open and visible.

He was a great Example of Meekness; I dont remember I ever saw him in a Passion, and I believe, those that were most conversant with him, seldom saw him transported.

The Grace of Humility shone bright'y in him. The low Thoughts He had of himself and his Performances, would not suffer him to publish any thing of his Works; tho' in the Opinion of good Judges, many of them did well deserve to be added to the publick Treasury of the Church. He esteem'd others better than himself. Few Men had less of Pride and Haughtiness, or were more observable for a condescending Carriage to all Sorts of People.

His love to Peace was very conspicuous. Nothing more contrary to his Inclination and Temper than Strife and Contention, especially about religious Matters. He durst not conceal his own Sentiments, yet strictly observ'd those Rules

H

of

of Decency, Respect and Love, which the Gospel prescribes in Relation to those that differ'd from him, which has occasion'd a Report that is injurious to his Character, and many know to be intirely groundless: But of this in its proper Place.

He was of a very tender sympathizing Spirit. The feeling Sense He had of his own Burthens and Afflictions, made him very pitiful and compassionate to others. When He met with Troubles, his constant recourse was to God. Having laid them at his Feet, there He would rest; as knowing He could carry them no farther: And then his great Care was, to practice an intire Resignation and Submission to the Divine Will. Patience in bearing, and Patience in waiting God's Will and Pleasure, were lovely Graces He endeavour'd to be well acquainted with.

I shall add no more to this Part of his Character *as a Christian*, than his being a diligent observer of Providence. He ey'd it narrowly, and was careful in minuting down his remarks upon it. He found the Benefit of such Observations many ways. His frequent reviewing them, were no doubt a great Support and Comfort to him.

As to his *relative Religion*, He had a due regard to God in his Family. And all that knew him, must know; that as a Husband, none could be more tender and loving; As a Father none more affectionate, or more truly concern'd for the Welfare of his Children;
And

And as a Master, scarce any more discreet or kind.

He was a sincere, faithful and fast Friend. His Charity to others, was not confin'd but extensive; being inclin'd and ready to do good to all, and in all manner of Ways, that were in his Power. Such was his Piety and Prudence : Such his inoffensive and obliging Behaviour, as gain'd him the Esteem and Love of most He convers'd with. Some have thought that within the Compass of his Acquaintance, He had as many hearty Friends and as few Enemies, as most in the like Circumstances. People of all Persuasions carried it with a distinguishing respect unto him.

Having said thus much of *his personal Piety*. I shall now add something concerning his Character *as a Minister of Christ*. I may here shew, how well He answer'd to the Qualifications mention'd of a godly useful Minister in the foregoing Sermon.

In ministerial Abilities He exceeded many, having by his great Diligence and Application in his younger Days, laid up a good Stock of substantial and useful Knowledge, by which Means, He became *a Scribe well instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, skilful in the Word of Righteousness, and able to bring out of his Treasure Things new and old.*

Being intrusted with the Ministry, it was his great Concern to approve himself faithful to his Light, and the Dictates of his Conscience. As He kept back nothing of *the Counsel of God*, so He took care to insist mostly upon those things,

He judg'd necessary to be believed and practis'd to Salvation. What He preach'd He was ready in the most publick Manner to own. In our late unhappy Differences, He was concern'd and desirous to have his Name seen among those that had subscrib'd the great Article that relates to the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity. It is an injurious Reflection, which some have been too officious in casting upon him, *that He was drawn into it*. I can solemnly Witness for him, that He did it, *with the greatest Freedom and willingness*, lamenting at the same time, that there were so many who should refuse, and not knowing how they could account for it.

There are those, who if need be, are ready to attest, *That He thought it his Duty, and could not be at rest till He had done it*.

I take this Opportunity also to wipe off a Reproach from my self, as if I had repented of what I had done, and that I should go mourning for it to the Grave. I declare it utterly false, but believe; That indeed so it would have been if I had omitted what I have judg'd, and do still judge, to have been my Duty. I pray God most heartily to forgive those, who by this and many other false Reports and subtile Methods, have endeavour'd to injure my Reputation, and to lessen the small Use, which God is pleas'd to make of me. I bear ill Will to none, and have a great deal of Comfort, to find, I dare not treat others as some have treated me. The Reader will excuse this short Digression. I proceed in the Character of my Friend.

He was not more faithful than He was diligent and laborious in his Work, serving the Lord Night and Day, for a Course of many Years, and that, under many Discouragements, and sometimes in great Straits and Difficulties; not baulking his Duty when under Disorder of Body, more fit to be in Bed than in the Pulpit. Denying himself the outward Advantages and Comforts of Life for the good of his People: Continuing with them, all the while they were in no Condition to encourage any other Minister to come among them, in Case He had left them; and not leaving them 'till they were in Circumstances able to procure to themselves an acceptable Supply. How He discharg'd his Duty for the little time He was here in *London*, I shall say presently, after I have observ'd;

He was an affectionate tender spirited Minister, one that *had Compassion on the Ignorant, and them that are out of the Way*. His Heart was fill'd with Love to Souls. *Who was there weak, and He was not weak? Who was in Sorrow, and He not Afflicted?* As his Affection and Pity inclin'd him, so his Prudence instructed him to suit himself to All, according to their different States and Circumstances. *To the weak I became as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all Men, that I might by all Means save some, 1 Cor. ix. 22.* He was in a special Manner very affectionately concern'd for the good of young People, and by ingratiating himself with them, He became very serviceable in his Admonitions and Counsels to many.

And

And now as to the Account of him for the little Time He was here in *London*, where together with his Work He finish'd his Days; I shall give it in the Words of his ingenious worthy Friend who constantly attended on his Ministry, and which he was pleas'd to oblige me with in a Letter.

' To essay the Character of the late Rev^d Mr. *William Hocker*, is a Task too great for my Attempt. He lies embalm'd in my Memory, and will continue so 'till Vision and Fruition. His Ministry was with great plainness and Judgment. The great things of God, the Power of Heart-Religion, and the faithful Display of the Duties of both Tables were his constant Themes. Polemical Divinity He studiously avoided; yet in a Manner (I think) peculiar to himself, He asserted the great Doctrines of Christianity with great strength of Reason, always inculcating the Necessity of their being so to our Salvation.

' When He came first among us, He says, *1 Cor. ii. 2. I determin'd not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified*; from which He gave us 4 Sermons. The Doctrine was; *That the knowledge of Jesus Christ and him crucified is the most excellent Subject that Ministers can preach, and People be acquainted with.* From which He shew'd at large, who, and what He was, that render'd him most excellent. He passes on, in 4 Sermons more, from *Philip. iii. 8. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the*

' Excel-

‘ *Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Je-*
 ‘ *sus my Lord.* After He had set forth the Ex-
 ‘ cellency of Christ, the great Value and E-
 ‘ steem all Believers had for Him, and the ab-
 ‘ solute Necessity of obtaining Him; He gave 2
 ‘ Sermons from *John vi. 37. Him that cometh*
 ‘ *unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* His Doc-
 ‘ trine was; *That the Lord Jesus is so far from*
 ‘ *rejecting any, in whose Heart it is to come to*
 ‘ *him; that He will willingly admit them, and*
 ‘ *joyfully receive and entertain them.* He then
 ‘ preaches to *1 Cor. i. 30. But of him are ye in*
 ‘ *Christ Jesus, who of GOD is made unto us*
 ‘ *Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification,*
 ‘ *and Redemption.* Here was the Believers
 ‘ Charter which He open’d and explain’d at
 ‘ large, and proceeded to other Subjects.

‘ His ministerial Work was his Delight. His
 ‘ Heart was always in it, chearfully embracing
 ‘ all offers, not excepting against Times or Di-
 ‘ stance. He never denied Repetition, if ask’d,
 ‘ in private Family.

‘ He was indefatigable in visiting the Sick, and
 ‘ distressed in Body and Mind, and with equal
 ‘ readiness to poor and rich; so that He became
 ‘ in a very little time greatly honour’d and esteem-
 ‘ ed by his new Acquaintance, liv’d universally
 ‘ belov’d, and died greatly lamented.

May the Lord of the Harvest, with whom
 is the Residue of the Spirit, send forth many such
 faithful Labourers into his Harvest.

